

FOERSTER, LISA R., D.M.A. Expressive Use of Form, Melody and Harmony in Fanny Hensel's Settings of Lyric Poetry by Johann Wolfgang von Goethe: A Study of Selected Lieder. (2012)  
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Fanny (Mendelssohn) Hensel (1805-1847) produced at least 250 lieder during her short life. Of these, 34 settings were to poems by Goethe. As a group, the settings of Goethe poetry show great creativity through variety in form, melodic invention, harmonic interest and manipulation of the text. These settings span her entire compositional life, and her response to Goethe's poetry is varied. Rather than showing a consistent progression of style development, she reacted to the need of the poem before her, not to a preconceived notion of form or style. Her creative approach to lieder reflects her position at the beginning of the Romantic era as a composer who built upon, and moved beyond, the legacy of the Second Berlin School and her teacher Friedrich Zelter.

This dissertation discusses in detail eleven examples of Goethe settings by Hensel, nine already published and two from manuscript sources at the Mendelssohn Archive in Berlin. The songs include a variety of forms, among them the late strophic "Dämmerung senkte sich von oben" (1843), the modified strophic setting "Sehnsucht," and the rondo "Neue Liebe, Neues Leben". Also discussed are the two versions of "Wenn ich mir in stiller Seele" which are through-composed settings of the poem written for Hensel by Goethe in 1827; the second version has just been published in research by Hans-Günther Klein (2011). The other six through-composed settings ("Sehnsucht nach Italien," "An Suleika," "Ist es möglich,

Stern der Sterne," "Mignon," "Wonne der Wehmut," and "Hausgarten") are discussed in terms of their poetic setting, especially their use of repetition of text ("An Suleika"), diminished seventh chords ("Wonne der Wehmut" and "Dämmerung senkte sich von oben") modulations ("Sehnsucht"), and rhythmic variety ("Hausgarten" and "Neue Liebe, Neues Leben"). Two lieder, "Wonne der Wehmut" and "Ist es möglich, Stern der Sterne" have not been published and will be presented in a transcription from the manuscript. Fanny Hensel's ability to use choice of form, melodic invention, harmonic coloration and freedom with the text, in service to the poetry produced interesting, expressive lieder. Although unrecognized during her lifetime and only seriously considered from the 1980's onward her works show the development of the through-composed form and a robust melodic inventiveness that earn her a position of consideration next to Schubert in the history of the early romantic lied.

EXPRESSIVE USE OF FORM, MELODY AND HARMONY IN  
FANNY HENSEL'S SETTINGS OF LYRIC POETRY BY  
JOHANN WOLFGANG VON GOETHE:  
A STUDY OF SELECTED LIEDER

By

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Approved by

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To Dorothy Jean Foerster, my mother,  
for her unfailing love,  
and for teaching me by example the meaning of perseverance.

APPROVAL PAGE

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## CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

*Fanny Hensel*

She is addicted to songs, and orders poems from Goethe.

*Schnee- und Theezeitung, Nr. 8, 21. November 1827*<sup>1</sup>

While the name Fanny Hensel (born Mendelssohn) is much better known now because of several comprehensive biographies, the most recent by R. Larry Todd<sup>2</sup>, there is still a lack of critical knowledge about her works, especially her lieder. Because her lieder went largely unpublished in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and are only now becoming available, there has been no way to evaluate her contributions to the development of the romantic German lied. While this study does not attempt in any way to be comprehensive, it does attempt to move beyond biographical knowledge and begin to develop an understanding of her style of composition and her unique place in the development of the lied. She was

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<sup>1</sup> Hans-Günther Klein, "Wenn ich mir in stiller Seele..." in *Musik im sozialen Raum: Festschrift für Peter Schleuning zum 70. Geburtstag*, ed. Freia Hoffmann, Markus Gärtner, Axel Weidenfeld (Munich: Alliteral Verlag, 2011), 122. In the original: "Sie ist lieder-süchtig und bestellt bei Göthe Gedichte."

<sup>2</sup> R. Larry Todd, *Fanny Hensel: The Other Mendelssohn* (New York: Oxford University Press, Inc., 2010)

positioned as a successor to the Second Berlin School through her teacher Friedrich Zelter and was a contemporary of Franz Schubert. This study is limited to works that employ the lyric poetry of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, a poet undeniably influential to the genre of the lied and a person with whom Hensel had personal ties. By looking closely at eleven of the thirty-four settings Hensel made of Goethe poetry, we see her great creativity through variety in form, melodic invention, harmonic interest and manipulation of the text. These settings span her entire compositional life and show that she responded to each text individually, not to a preconceived notion of form or style.

Fanny Hensel, née Mendelssohn (1805-1847) produced at least 250 lieder, a significant portion of her total oeuvre of approximately 460 works, during her short life. She was born into a well to do family and afforded an equal academic and musical training as her also musically talented brother, Felix Mendelssohn. Although not allowed to partake in public aspects of music making, she was supported by family, (especially her mother Lea, brother Felix and husband Wilhelm Hensel) as well as her composition teacher Carl Friedrich Zelter (1758-1832), among others, in using her gift for composition. According to R. Larry Todd:

she is widely regarded as the most significant female composer of the nineteenth century, even though for most of her forty-one years she practiced her art privately among a circle of family and friends, and semiprivate in the brilliant Sunday concerts she supervised at her Berlin family residence, accessible to the artistic and social elite of the day but closed to the general public.<sup>3</sup>

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid., ix.

In the lied Hensel found a genre that suited her creative temperament, and in Hensel the lied found a composer that was able to exploit the early romantic sound palate to create expressive jewel-like settings of German romantic lyric poetry. Situated in the same time frame as a recognized giant in German lieder, Franz Schubert (1797-1828), who is considered “the musical genius (who) transformed the song form into a vehicle for unprecedented musical expressivity,”<sup>4</sup> Fanny’s songs can also be considered part of the new musical paradigm of the romantic German lied. This paradigm shift happened, not suddenly with Schubert’s “Gretchen am Spinnrade,” but rather began subtly within the Second Berlin School with composers such as Hensel’s teacher Friedrich Zelter, who used many different forms and techniques in his lieder.

### *Fanny Hensel’s Influences*

#### The First and Second Berlin Schools

In order to understand Hensel’s place in the development of the lied and to evaluate her works, it is useful to briefly discuss the concept of the lied in late eighteenth century German society as well as within the First and Second Berlin Schools. As James Parsons states in the introduction to *The Cambridge Companion to the Lied*: it “is evident that the lied stood at the heart of German musical life beginning slightly before the middle of the eighteenth century and continuing

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<sup>4</sup> Jack M. Stein, *Poem and Music in the German Lied from Gluck to Hugo Wolf* (Cambridge, Massachusetts: Harvard University Press, 1971), 17.

throughout the nineteenth, and into the twentieth.”<sup>5</sup> However, the lied was not a static form but changed rapidly throughout this period.

The production of eighteenth century lieder was centered in Berlin and is now described by the terms First Berlin School (from about 1750 to 1780) and Second Berlin School (from about 1780 to 1815). Reacting to the excesses of Baroque style, the First Berlin School, led by Christian Gottfried Krause (1719-1770,) attempted “to bring back the principle of *Volkstümlichkeit* to the lied.”<sup>6</sup> The characteristics of this folk-like (*volkstümlich*) song produced a simplicity of style that was ascribed to by the composers of this period. Desired aspects of the style included brief and usually strophic settings, avoidance of large melodic leaps, simple harmonies and accompaniments with avoidance of chromaticism, and no repetition of text.<sup>7</sup> The number of song collections published during this period increased greatly with over 758 collections published from 1753 to 1800 alone.<sup>8</sup>

#### Carl Friedrich Zelter

Many of the above listed attributes are also attached to the Second Berlin School, but a closer look shows developments that would influence and encourage the blossoming of the lied in the nineteenth century, and directly influenced Fanny

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<sup>5</sup> James Parsons, ed., *The Cambridge Companion to the Lied* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 11.

<sup>6</sup> Raymond Arthur Barr, “Carl Friedrich Zelter: A study of the Lied in Berlin During the Late Eighteenth and Early Nineteenth Centuries” (PhD diss., University of Wisconsin, 1968), 21.

<sup>7</sup> *Ibid.*, 28.

<sup>8</sup> *Ibid.*, 18.

Hensel's style through her tutelage under Carl Friedrich Zelter. Zelter was one of three dominating figures of the Second Berlin School along with Johann Abraham Peter Schulz (1747-1800) and Johann Friedrich Reichardt (1752-1814). These composers moved beyond the simplicity of the First Berlin School and each made a contribution to the style of the German lied. The most conservative of the three, Schulz retained a simple harmonic style but experimented with strophic variation. Reichardt made the accompaniment a more important part of the lied. All three composers started setting a higher caliber of poetry than had been previously used. "Works of all the better poets, from the members of the *Göttinger Hainbund* to Goethe and Schiller, began to be used by lied composers, thus raising the caliber of the literary aspect of the lied to a much higher plane."<sup>9</sup>

Zelter, considered by Barr to be the most liberal of the Second Berlin School,<sup>10</sup> experimented in all areas of lied composition. Although most of his works were composed in strophic style, he wrote 20 in a strophic variation style, 16 through-composed, four rondo and 12 in a hybrid form called by Barr "cyclic" (a form with recurrent thematic material but less unified than strophic variation style).<sup>11</sup> He wrote melodies with wide leaps and melismatic passages, he experimented harmonically, he extended the importance of the accompaniment, and he used German language markings. He also "studiously avoided the rigid

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<sup>9</sup> Ibid., 35.

<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 34.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 145.

periodicity so characteristic of the classical era”<sup>12</sup> and experimented with phrase length and shifting of bar lines in relationship to poetic lines. Among his 210 lied settings are 75 to texts by Goethe.

Zelter was an important composer and pedagogue in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. He was conductor of the Berlin Sing-Akademie and had a number of music pupils including Giacomo Meyerbeer, Bernard Klein, Carl Loewe and Otto Nicolai. He was engaged by Lea Mendelssohn in the spring of 1819 to be the music teacher of her two eldest children, Fanny and Felix. He replaced the piano pedagogue Ludwig Berger (1777-1839), a student of Clementi, who had been Felix and Fanny’s teacher since 1817. It is unclear whether Berger taught them composition or just piano. However, Fanny excelled by this time at piano virtuosity. “At this point Fanny was the child prodigy, more so even than Felix. Her mother taught her the piano, her father listened to her playing, and both parents were all the more demanding since she was living up to their expectations.”<sup>13</sup>

Zelter introduced the Mendelssohn brother and sister to works by Bach, Dittersdorf, Gluck and Handel. He wanted to give the young musicians grounding in the traditions of the eighteenth century, but didn’t encourage study of Haydn, Mozart or Beethoven.<sup>14</sup> Under Zelter’s instruction we see the first of Fanny’s compositions: a song for her father’s birthday on December 11, 1819 entitled “Ihr

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<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 143.

<sup>13</sup> Françoise Tillard, *Fanny Mendelssohn*, trans. Camille Naish (Portland: Amadeus Press, 1992), 53.

<sup>14</sup> Antje Olivier, *Mendelssohn Schwester Fanny Hensel: Musikerin, Komponistin, Dirigentin* (Düsseldorf: Droste, 1997), 24.

Töne schwingt euch fröhlich,” for piano and voice. She thrived under Zelter’s rigorous method and at this point, four years older than Felix, progressed faster at theory and composition. Soon, however, she would receive the now famous letter from her father, Abraham Mendelssohn (dated July 16, 1820) that delineated the difference between the career that her brother Felix could await versus her need to make music “an ornament, and never the fundamental bass-line of your existence and activity.”<sup>15</sup> But having received a strong grounding in piano and composition she continued to compose and grow as a musician.

### Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Hensel was exposed to the poetry of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749-1832) very early through lied settings by Zelter, as well as through Zelter’s close personal friendship with Goethe. Through this relationship there was also contact of other members of Mendelssohn family, especially Felix, with the famous poet. She read, memorized and set many poems of Goethe throughout her life. She used his poetry in more than an eighth of her entire lieder output (34 settings of 31 poems), returning to his works over a span of 26 years.

Zelter began a friendship with Goethe after sending a volume of lieder containing several Goethe settings to a friend who forwarded it to Goethe in 1796. The two men met in 1799 and began a friendship that continued to their deaths. They carried on a correspondence “filled with a continuing discussion of the

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<sup>15</sup> Tillard, *Fanny Mendelssohn*, 68.

theoretical aspects of music”<sup>16</sup> which shows Goethe’s attitudes about musical settings of his works as well as his theoretical musings about music in general. Goethe appreciated settings of his poetry by Zelter, saying “thus I can say of Herr Zelter’s settings of my songs: that I had hardly believed that music was capable of expressing such heartfelt sounds.”<sup>17</sup> A major contributor to the lyric poetry suitable for musical setting in the eighteenth century, Goethe was a literary force in his lifetime, and his works continue to be important to the canon in the realms of drama, literature and lyric poetry (song). Goethe was exposed to music in his family home. His mother played piano and sang, his father played flute and lute and Goethe studied piano and cello. He served as director of the Weimar Court Theater from 1791 to 1817 and during this time was in charge of the production of numerous operas, plays and sung plays (*Singspiele*). He favored Mozart’s operas and produced them more than those of any other composer. He wrote two large literary works that contain lyric poems meant to be set to music. These are the novel *Wilhelm Meister’s Lehrjahre* and the verse drama *Faust*. He was very interested in the best musicians of the day and met and heard the music of (among others) Mozart, Felix Mendelssohn, Clara Wieck, and Paganini.

Goethe’s attitudes toward music impacted the poetry he wrote and how he wanted his poetry to be set musically. He valued singing above instrumental music as he expressed in this metaphor from a love letter to Charlotte von Stein in August

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<sup>16</sup> Barr, “Carl Friedrich Zelter,” 101.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 94.



1782: "As music is nothing without the human voice, so would my life be nothing without your love."<sup>18</sup> He also saw music as special among the arts because of its expressive powers. In his *Maximen und Reflexionen* he stated, "The dignity of Art appears in music perhaps most significantly, because it has no material that must be allowed for. It is all form and content and enhances and ennobles all that it expresses."<sup>19</sup> It is also possible to understand Goethe's attitude towards the union of his poetry with music by looking at his own words. Speaking about Zelter's ability to set his poetry he said: "The originality of his compositions is, as far as I can judge, never just a notion, rather it is a radical reproduction of the poetic intention."<sup>20</sup> In a letter to Zelter he writes, "your compositions feel to me so identical to my poems (Liedern); the music only takes them into the air, like a gas filling a balloon and taking it up."<sup>21</sup> Looking closer at what comprised the reproduction of the poetic intention, we see that Goethe expected the music to express the mood of the poem, but not to paint the action. He wrote to the composer Adalbert Schöpke:

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<sup>18</sup> Hedwig Walwei-Wiegelmann, ed. *Goethe's Gedanken über Musik* (Frankfurt am Main: Insel Verlag, 1985), 129. In the original: "Wie die Musik nichts ist ohne menschliche Stimme, so wäre mein Leben nichts ohne deine Liebe."

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 55. In the original: "Die Würde der Kunst erscheint bei der Musik vielleicht am eminentesten, weil sie keinen Stoff hat, der abgerechnet werden müsste. Sie ist ganz Form und Gehalt und erhöht und veredelt alles, was sie ausdrückt."

<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 137. In the original: "Das Originale seiner Kompositionen ist, soviel ich beurteilen kann, niemals ein Einfall, sondern es ist eine radikale Reproduktion der poetischen Intentionen."

<sup>21</sup> Ibid., In the original: "Diese Kompositionen fühle ich sogleich mit meinen Liedern identisch, die Musik nimmt nur, wie ein einströmendes Gas, den Luftballon mit in die Höhe."

To answer your question, for example, what the composer may paint (malen)? I dare to answer you with a paradox: "Nothing and everything". Nothing! That he through the outer senses perceives, may he copy; but he may depict everything that he feels from the influences on these outer senses. To copy thunder in music is no art, but the composer who can make me feel as if I have heard thunder, would be very valuable.....I repeat, music's biggest and most honorable prerogative is to move the heart within, without needing to use common outward means.<sup>22</sup>

Goethe is very clear here in differentiating between word painting of specific words and grasping and setting the intent of the poem. Often quotes from Goethe's letters and writings are used to support the idea that he only wanted strophic settings of his works and that the poem should play a dominant role in the union of the two. However, Goethe iterates on several occasions that "capturing an understanding of the *Gehalt* was the most important factor in a *Lied* and he accepted a composer's illustration of his verse when it accomplished this."<sup>23</sup> *Gehalt* for Goethe meant the content or substance of the poem in opposition to the *Gestalt*, which is the form of the artwork. Byrne explains this well:

The sound patterns, rhyme, rhythm, colour and shape are the artist's material, which once fashioned by the artist constitutes the *Gestalt*. The *Gestalt*, which is the work of art, is expressive of the elusive but familiar

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<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 140. In the original: "Auf Ihre Frage zum Beispiel, was der Musiker malen dürfte? Wage ich mit einem Paradox zu antworten: "Nichts und Alles." Nichts! Wie er es durch die äussern Sinneseinwirkungen empfindet. Den Donner in Musik nachzuahmen ist keine Kunst, aber der Musiker, der das Gefühl in mir erregt, als wenn ich donnern hörte, würde sehr schätzbar sein...Ich wiederhole: das Innere in Stimmung zu setzen, ohne die gemeinen äussern Mittel zu brauche, ist der Musik grosses und edles Vorrecht."

<sup>23</sup> Lorraine Byrne, *Schubert's Goethe Settings* (Burlington, VT: Ashgate Publishing Company, 2003), 12.

patterns of our inner life, those transient experiences that Goethe believed were expressible in no other way. This is its *Gehalt*, implicit in it and never to be made explicit by a 'transcendence' into another art form.<sup>24</sup>

Goethe used form, rhythm, meter and language in his poetry to express the content (*Gehalt*) and he was impressed with a setting or performance that expressed that content, in whatever form it took. Byrne uses Zelter's setting of *Rastlose Liebe* as an example to show this.<sup>25</sup> Written in a through-composed style it is not typical of the Second Berlin School. However Goethe praised the setting to Zelter because it expressed the meaning of the poem.

Goethe wrote poetry in several different styles throughout his career including *Sturm und Drang*, *Weimar classicism*, emulation of Persian poetry (*West-Östlicher Divan*), and Asian inspired poetry. But there are two important unifying aspects of his poetry: a mastery of word sounds, the use of common language to express lofty ideas, and the concept of confessional lyric (*Bekenntnislyrik*). The first aspect contains Goethe's ability to use words from a common vocabulary in such artfulness as to produce a powerful, rhythmic, sonorous whole. He used this ability in the service of the second aspect, that of expression. *Bekenntnislyrik* became a prevalent form in the later eighteenth century. It was a direct, subjective statement of a personal sort and Goethe who "was a master of this kind of lyric expression, succeeded in using the mechanics of poetry (meter, rhyme, rhythm, strophe) to

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<sup>24</sup> Byrne, *Schubert's Goethe Settings*, 21-22.

<sup>25</sup> *Ibid.*, 13.

create a sense of transcending them into an intensely personal statement.”<sup>26</sup> This style of expression would prove to serve composers of nineteenth century lieder well, including Fanny Hensel.

Fanny Hensel had a relationship not only with Goethe’s poetry, but also with Goethe himself. Along with her sister and brothers she read Goethe’s *Faust* and *Werther* along with works of Lessing, Schiller, and Jean Paul as part of a complete education. When Zelter became Fanny and Felix’s composition teacher, he already had a close friendship with Goethe, and had also written many lieder to texts by the great poet. Zelter’s relationship became a boon for the twelve-year-old Felix when he took him to visit Goethe in 1821. But the 16-year-old Fanny was not invited along on the trip and had to vicariously take part in it. In the letters she wrote to her brother while he was in Weimar she intermingled news from home with requests for reports on every aspect of Goethe and his home. In the letter from October 28, 1821 she asked: “When you go to Goethe’s, I advise you to keep your eyes open and prick up your ears, and if you can’t relate every detail to me afterwards, I will consider us ex-friends. Please don’t forget to sketch his house, for I would like that.”<sup>27</sup> She continued later in the same letter by saying “You haven’t written us what kind of an instrument Goethe has. Pay close attention to his room, for you have to give me a detailed description of it.”<sup>28</sup> Again in the same letter she joked that “My

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<sup>26</sup> Stein, *Poem and Music in the German Lied*, 27.

<sup>27</sup> Marcia J. Citron, ed. *The Letters of Fanny Hensel to Felix Mendelssohn* (New York: Pendragon Press, 1987), 1.

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*, 2.

friends upstairs will think I've traveled with you *incognito*"<sup>29</sup> because she was home with a cold. Perhaps she was simply voicing her wish to be there, even if incognito.

In a later letter (November 3) she tells her brother:

Rejoice that you are in Weimar and can breathe in the poetic air that wafts around you. You must take note of his native city for your finale. You're very fortunate to spend some time in Goethe's house and see him in familiar surroundings with his friends.<sup>30</sup>

Fanny's heart was with her teacher and brother in Weimar, even if she had to stay behind in Berlin. Felix introduced Goethe to several of Fanny's lieder (among them the first version of "Erster Verlust") as he reported in his letter of November 6, 1821.<sup>31</sup> It is often reported (based on the family biography by Fanny's son Sebastian Hensel<sup>32</sup>) that Goethe wrote the poem "An die Entfernte" for Fanny at this time, but it is more likely that he wrote and sent the poem to her in 1827, not 1821.

The probability of a later date for the poem is supported by several facts laid out in an article by Hans-Günther Klein published in 2011,<sup>33</sup> where he also introduces a second setting by Fanny of the poem which she called "Wenn ich mir in stiller Seele." This version of events is based on a notation in Goethe's diary written on October 13, 1827: "Kleines Gedicht für Fanny Mendelssohn" (small poem for Fanny Mendelssohn) and the fact that Zelter was visiting Goethe from the twelfth to

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid., 6.

<sup>31</sup> Tillard, *Fanny Mendelssohn*, 100.

<sup>32</sup> Sebastian Hensel, *Die Familie Mendelssohn 1729-1847: Nach Briefen und Tagebüchern* (Berlin: 1879).

<sup>33</sup> Klein, "Wenn ich mir in stiller Seele...", 113-122.

the eighteenth of October of that year.<sup>34</sup> There is further collaboration in two letters that Fanny wrote; the first was a thank you note to Zelter (dated October 19, 1827) with the request to pass the thanks on to Goethe, which didn't reach Zelter in Weimar in time. In this letter she wrote:

I ask you to thank him, in whose power it is to make blissfully happy all those around him through a look, word or gift. A poem from Goethe! Such a poem! And completely from his hand. I will, because it cannot be a reward for past successful achievements, see it as an encouragement, and I will endeavor to earn it at some point in the future. It will always be before my eyes and I will consider myself its full owner when I find myself a good bit better...Again, a request to clothe my thanks in your words and bring them in that way to the ear of the giver.<sup>35</sup>

Because this letter did not arrive in time, she wrote another letter directly to Goethe on October 25 where, after thanking him profusely, she speaks about setting the poem:

When I would succeed in finding the right tones for your words, I would perhaps be able to see myself as a less unworthy owner of such a treasure, in which you have bestowed a task and reward, that may not expect to wait for the best solution.<sup>36</sup>

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<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 114.

<sup>35</sup> Ibid., 116. In original: "...und darf Sie bitten, dem dafür zu danken, in dessen Macht es steht, durch Blick, Wort oder Gabe, rings um sich her zu beseligen. Ein Gedicht von Goethe! Ein solches Gedicht! Und ganz von seiner Hand. Ich werde es, da es mir nicht Belohnung schon errungener Verdienst seyn kann, als Aufmunterung betrachten, und mich bemühen, es einst in Zukunft zu verdienen, es soll mir immer vor Augen seyn, und ich werde nicht erst dann als vollständige Besitzerinn betrachten, wenn ich mich um ein gutes Theil besser geworden finde... Nochmals die Bitte, kleiden Sie meinen Dank in Ihre Worte, und bringen ihn so in würdiger Form vor das Ohr des Gebers."

<sup>36</sup> Ibid., 118. In original: "Wenn es mir gelänge, die richtigen Töne zu Ihren Worten

Up to this point there has only been one known setting by Fanny of this poem dated January 19, 1828 in D minor/D major. But there is no proof that this version was sent to Weimar. A version was delivered to Goethe by Karl Holtei as he reports in his diary dated March 4, 1828.<sup>37</sup> This delivery could have been the (by Klein) newly found version in the Goethe-Schiller-Archiv. This is an autograph copy of a setting without a title, composer or poet named, but it is contained in a small black leather box with gold ornamental frame and inner edging. This is similar to a gift box made for Felix' opus 3 that was given to Goethe. The setting is in Fanny's hand and is a completely different version than the other setting (it is in E-flat major in triple meter). No other copy of this version has been found. It is interesting that this simpler setting is the one that found its way to the poet, although we don't know which version was written first. Both versions will be discussed later in this paper.

The only other personal contact known between Goethe and Fanny Hensel was a visit the Mendelssohn family made in 1822 on the way back from Switzerland. Lea, Fanny's mother, wrote to her cousin about the visit saying that the poet "was very pleasant and friendly with Fanny too; she had to play Bach to him often, and he was extraordinarily pleased with the lieder she had composed to his poems: it always gladdens him to see his work set to music."<sup>38</sup>

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zu finden, würde ich mich vielleicht al seine weniger unwürdige Besitzerinn solches Schatzes betrachten dürfen, in welchem Sie mir, mit der Aufgabe zugleich einen Lohn verliehen habe, den nicht einmal die glücklichste Lösung erwarten durfte."

<sup>37</sup> Ibid., 118.

<sup>38</sup> Tillard, *Fanny Mendelssohn*, 103.

Regardless of the fact that she only met Goethe once, Hensel knew his work very well and returned to it again and again in her compositional life. She quoted his works in letters, and wrote to her brother Felix while on her first Italian trip:

By the by, is it not our favorite poet, whose thoughts are present to one in the best hours? Goethe has not left me on this trip, and how often have we, together in the carriage, put together complete poems from him that we almost didn't know any more and it brought us joy.<sup>39</sup>

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<sup>39</sup> Annette Maurer, *Thematisches Verzeichnis der Klavierbegleiteten Sololieder Fanny Hensels* (Kassel: Furore-Verlag, 1997), 110. In original: "By the by, ist das nicht unser Lieblingsdichter, dessen Gedanken Einem stets in den besten Stunden gegenwärtig sind? Goethe hat mich auf dieser Reise nicht verlassen, u.wie o[ft] im Wagen, haben wir ganze Gedichte von ih[m,] von denen wir fast nichts mehr wußten, zusammen gebracht, u. uns daran erfreu[t]."



## CHAPTER II

### GOETHE SETTINGS BY FANNY HENSEL

As a group, the settings of Goethe poetry by Fanny Hensel show a great creativity and variety in form, melodic invention, harmonic interest and manipulation of the text. Her settings of Goethe poems outnumber her settings of any other single poet. Out of over 460 total works at least 250 are lieder and more than an eighth of those are settings of Goethe poetry. The 34 currently known Goethe settings (including the second version of “Wenn ich mir in stiller Seele” found by Klein) were written throughout her life, from the earliest “Nähe des Geliebten” (first version) in 1821 (written when she was 16 years old) to *Erwin* in 1846 (a year before her death). Three poems were set two times: “Wenn ich mir in stiller Seele,” “Wandrer's Nachtlid,” and “Nähe des Geliebten.”

The variety of sources from which Hensel selected poems shows a breadth of knowledge of Goethe's work. The poems chosen were written from 1775 to 1827, a span of over 50 years and from all of Goethe's poetic styles. Some poems come from collections such as the *West-östlicher Divan*, *Radierten Blätter nach Handzeichnungen von Goethe* and *Chinesisch-deutsche Tages- und Jahreszeiten*. Others come from the novel *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre*. The most interesting origin is the poem Goethe wrote for Fanny personally, “Wenn ich mir in stiller Seele,” described above.

Fanny's response to the poetry of Goethe is varied and does not show a consistent progression of stylistic development. The common view of Hensel's song composition is a progression from simple strophic settings with doubling of the voice in the right hand of the piano, clearly changing at the end of the 1820s to a more interesting accompaniment, larger tessitura of the voice and more through-composed lieder.<sup>40</sup> Indeed, Jürgen Thym states "almost without exception, Fanny's songs composed in the 1820s are simple strophic settings with subordinate piano accompaniment."<sup>41</sup> However, of all of Hensel's Goethe settings during this period (the 1820s), fourteen are through-composed compared to eight strophic settings. Of all Hensel's Goethe settings only one third (12) are strophic. (This is very similar to the lied innovator Franz Schubert, whose lied output can also be divided into one third strophic or modified strophic, and the remaining mostly through-composed.<sup>42</sup>) Of the remaining lieder, eighteen are through-composed and four are of various forms (rondo, modified strophic or fragment). Through-composed songs occur as early as 1820 (two) and the last Goethe lied she wrote ("Erwin") was strophic. She reacted to the unique needs of the poem before her, not to a preconceived notion of form or style. In this way she was an innovator from a very young age and throughout her compositional life.

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<sup>40</sup> Ibid., 8.

<sup>41</sup> Jürgen Thym, "Crosscurrents in Song: Five Distinctive Voices," in *German Lieder in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. Rufus Hallmark (New York: Schirmer Books, 1996), 164.

<sup>42</sup> Robert Winter, et al. "Schubert, Franz." In *Grove Music Online. Oxford Music Online*, <http://www.oxfordmusiconline.com/subscriber/article/grove/music/25109pg2> (accessed December 28, 2011).

For this study I have chosen eleven of the 34 Goethe settings to analyze in detail. Among them are eight through-composed, one strophic, one modified strophic and one rondo. Included are the two settings of “Wenn ich mir in stiller Seele.” As the above numbers show, I chose more through-composed lieder percentage-wise than strophic. This choice was based on the fact that she wrote through-composed lieder throughout her life and she was afforded more freedom to show her individuality as a composer in this form. Her response to the freedom of this form is to exploit it in different ways, as shown in the analyses below. As only one half (17) of the Goethe settings are in print currently, I accessed several manuscript sources at the Mendelssohn Archiv in Berlin, where many of Hensel’s notebooks are held. The second version of “Wenn ich mir in stiller Seele” is from the article by Klein.<sup>43</sup>

In studying Hensel’s selection of lieder, it is evident that the choice of poem leans to works that express personal feelings rather than tell a story. As stated previously, Goethe was a master at this type of poetry, *Bekenntnislyrik*, which became very popular in the late eighteenth century. It comes from “the emerging awareness of an individual self, which evolved into the self-consciousness of distinctly Romantic poetry.”<sup>44</sup> The poems analyzed below can be divided into three expressive categories. The first is an expression of longing and suffering and is

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<sup>43</sup> Klein, “Wenn ich mir in stiller Seele...,” 120-121.

<sup>44</sup> Harry Seelig, “The Literary Context: Goethe as Source and Catalyst,” in *German Lieder in the Nineteenth Century*, ed. Rufus Hallmark (New York: Schirmer Books, 1996), 9.

found in “Mignon,” “Sehnsucht nach Italien,” “Sehnsucht” and “Wenn ich mir in stiller Seele” (both versions). The second category is the common emotional subject of love. Exploring the double-sidedness of love are the lieder: “Neue Liebe, Neues Leben,” “Ist es möglich, Stern der Sterne,” “Wonne der Wehmut,” and “An Suleika.” Two other settings dealing with the third category, common romantic themes, are “Hausgarten” (comfort of home) and “Dämmerung senkte sich von oben” (a mood piece describing peace at sunset).

Hensel used a variety of means throughout her writing to express the emotional content of the text in her lieder. There is no clear pattern of trends; rather she used different combinations of several tools at her disposal in each of her songs. The first and perhaps most easy to recognize is the choice of form that Hensel used for each lied. In the nineteenth century lied composers used a variety of forms that developed from earlier styles. All of these had one thing in common: the use of departure and return. “The central issue of form in the temporal art of music is the use of departure and return. Formal ‘departure’ creates contrast and digression while formal ‘return’ ....creates repetition cohesion, and, at the work’s end, closure.”<sup>45</sup> One of the most common forms used by the early nineteenth century lied composers was strophic, with complete repetition of melodic material for each strophe of poetry. This is a form Hensel used in setting Goethe poetry, but was by no means the most common. Among the lieder addressed in this paper is the late

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<sup>45</sup> Deborah Stein and Robert Spillman, *Poetry into Song: Performance and Analysis of Lieder* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1996), 192.

strophic setting (1843) of “Dämmerung senkte sich von oben,” an expressive poem of two strophes that paints a moment in time. Another form, modified strophic, was also a popular choice of this period. This used the repetition of melodic material but allowed for changes, large or small, to heighten emotional expression. An example of this style set by Hensel is “Sehnsucht” (1839), which consists of five strophes of eight lines each. The form matches the need to tell the story and Hensel manipulated it to make it effective. Verses one and two are the same, verse three changes to minor, verse four has new melodic material and verse five has a long coda. A much less common form in this period is the rondo form, which developed from Baroque instrumental forms. Hensel used it to great effect in “Neue Liebe, Neues Leben” where positive thoughts of love are expressed by the A material and expressions of concern use different melodic material (B and C). The most common type of form used by Hensel in setting Goethe poetry was through-composed, a lied form that developed from early opera monody. This form allows the most freedom to the composer, and as explained below, Hensel used it in a variety of expressive ways. Eight of the eleven lieder analyzed here are through-composed.

Hensel was gifted at melodic invention and used different methods to express the meaning of the text. Some of the more common melodic ideas included using high notes at the most expressive moments (“Hausgarten”) or throughout to show longing (“Mignon”). She also used different phrase lengths within a song to make it more expressive (“Sehnsucht nach Italien,” “Mignon,” “Wenn ich mir in

stiller Seele," version 1). A very effective tool was the permutation of a melodic idea, seen most clearly in "An Suleika."

Alongside melodic invention she used the tools of text repetition as well as rhythmic accentuation (musical and poetic). Hensel was not averse to repeating text in her songs.

Hensel appears to have intuitively understood that to set a poem to music is not an act of translation. Slight changes sometimes are necessary, such as successively repeated lines or the creation of a textual refrain for the purpose of musical expression or formal unity; in others, she undertakes more significant alterations in order to leave a personal mark on the poetry.<sup>46</sup>

Out of the eleven settings discussed below there are ten that use some form of text repetition. (The exception is the strophic setting "Dämmerung senkte sich von oben"). Often the repetition consists of a few words at the end of the line repeated for emphasis. More noticeable are the repeats of entire lines of poetry, usually the last one or two lines of a strophe. This is seen for example in "Hausgarten" and "Sehnsucht" among others. Some settings use repeated text to form a coda such as "Neue Liebe, Neues Leben" and "Sehnsucht." A very interesting use of repetition is found in the 35 bar setting of "An Suleika," a four line poem, which is expanded through repetition to form a much larger entity.

In addition to text repetition, Hensel was sensitive to rhythmic issues as she set poems. She often put the beginning of the phrase on something other than beat

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<sup>46</sup> James Deaville, "A multitude of voices: the Lied at mid century" in *The Cambridge Companion to the Lied*, ed. James Parsons (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), 152.

one. In “Neue Liebe, Neues Leben” she consistently put the first word (accented in the poem) on the third beat of common time, giving the entire setting an upbeat feel as it rolls forward at an even pace. Another less obvious use of meter is seen in her setting of “Ist es möglich, Stern der Sterne” which, in the first section, has lines all beginning on the upbeat, but changes at bar 16 to downbeat phrasal beginnings. In “Sehnsucht nach Italien” the only phrases which start on beat one begin with the word *Kennst* (do you know?), giving that word special emphasis. In a number of her songs she used the rhythm of a dotted quarter followed by an eighth note (in duple or common time), which aids in the declamation of the German.

Hensel was not a harmonic innovator although she used harmony sensitively in her lieder. Her most common harmonic expressive devices include the use of fully diminished seventh chords, such as in “Mignon,” “An Suleika,” “Dämmerung senkte sich von oben,” and “Ist es möglich Stern der Sterne.” She substitutes this chord at times as a secondary dominant (vii° 7/V leading to V), for example in mm. 9 and 17 of “Ist es möglich, Stern der Sterne,” mm. 8 and 14 of “An Suleika” and m. 15 of “Dämmerung senkte sich von oben.” An even more interesting example is the use of a fully diminished seventh chord as an enharmonic pun in m. 12 of “Dämmerung senkte sich von oben.” She also uses a series of them for an interestingly colored transition from E♭ major back to G minor in mm. 21-25 of “Mignon.” Another device is the interplay of keys through modulation. One questions whether Hensel knew about Goethe’s debate with Zelter over the meaning of major and minor tonalities, and whether that influenced her use of the minor mode. In his letters,

Goethe questions the association of the minor mode with melancholy, and he relates major and minor tonalities to the duality in human nature. For Goethe, the major mode was an expression of all that is objective and connects the soul to the outer world, and the minor tonality is the mode of introspection and concentration.<sup>47</sup>

One can see this in Hensel's works, for example, in "Neue Liebe, Neues Leben" where a major/minor dichotomy reflects the conflicting feelings in the poem. The A sections are all in B-flat major while the B section is in D minor (iii) and the C sections moves into G minor (vi). Another lied is "Sehnsucht," which starts in vi (B minor) and ends in its relative key D major (I). A further example is the first version of "Wenn ich mir in stiller Seele," which moves from D minor through G minor (iv) to end in D major, reflecting moving from the inner life (minor) to an outward expression (major). Following is a discussion of each lied in detail, organized in chronological order.

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<sup>47</sup> Byrne, *Schubert's Goethe Settings*, 7.



### CHAPTER III

#### ANALYSIS OF INDIVIDUAL SONGS

#### *Sehnsucht nach Italien*

Composed on August 17, 1822, when Fanny Hensel was a mere 17 years old, this lied already shows Hensel's affinity to Goethe's poetry and her ability to use irregularity of phrase length to express emotion. The poem comes from the beginning of book three of Goethe's *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre* and is sung by the child of uncertain gender named Mignon. The entire poem of three strophes (only the first strophe of which is set by Hensel) expresses a longing to return to a land where lemons and oranges grow under a blue sky. This place seems to be Italy, but the exact location is not important to the character Mignon, rather it is a longing to return to a youth that is far away. The poem has been set at least 84 times,<sup>48</sup> including once by Schubert and six times by Zelter, who kept trying to find the best setting. In a letter to Goethe on March 24, 1818 he wrote: "I have set your 'Kennst du das Land' for the sixth time in music in order for once to please myself, and the best versions will make their way to Weimar."<sup>49</sup> Perhaps the interest in this poem for so

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<sup>48</sup> Stein, *Poem and Music in the German Lied*, 35.

<sup>49</sup> Carl Friedrich Zelter, *Fünfzig Lieder*, ed. Ludwig Landshoff (Mainz: B. Schott's Söhne, 1958), x. In original: "Dein 'Kennst du das Land' habe ich jetzt zum sechsten Male in Musik gesetzt um es mir selber einmal rechtzumachen, und die besten Stücke davon sollen nach Weimar wandern."

many composers arose from the unique form Goethe used (each strophe consists of seven lines, of which lines 1-4 and 7 are iambic pentameter and lines 5 and 6 are iambic dimeter), or the captivating picture he creates of glowing oranges, myrtle and bay trees surrounding a gleaming room filled with marble figures, or the feelings of isolation and longing therewith expressed. Fanny Hensel set this poem after she and her family traveled through Switzerland but turned back before reaching Italy, leaving Hensel with a longing that she expressed to her cousin Marianne:

What one does not see acts on the mind not less than the visible environs. The idea of the land that begins behind those mountains, indeed, the tangible nearness of Italy, the mere fact that the country people have all been to Italy, speak Italian and greet the traveler with the sweet sounds of the lovely language moved me immensely.<sup>50</sup>

The longing that Hensel felt at this time seems transferred to Mignon's longing in Goethe's poem.

Hensel set the first strophe only (there are no other verses written in the manuscript copy, which is usually the case) in a through-composed setting that reflects the mood of longing through 41 bars marked *Larghetto*, beginning and ending in A major.<sup>51</sup> Belying its early compositional date this setting uses interesting

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<sup>50</sup> Michael Bar-Shany, "The Roman Holiday of Fanny Mendelssohn Hensel," *Min-Ad: Israel Studies in Musicology Online* 5, no. 1 (2006) under <http://www.biu.ac.il/hu/mu/min-ad/> (accessed 11/4/11).

<sup>51</sup> Only published copy is in G major: Fanny Hensel, geb. Mendelssohn, *Ausgewählte Lieder: für Singstimme und Klavier*, ed. Aloysia Asenbaum (Düsseldorf: Edition Donna, 1991), 5-7.

rhythmic elements, uneven phrase length, a quickening of the setting of poetic feet, and melodic leaps to succeed as a whole. The first four words *Kennst du das Land* (do you know the land?) and line five, *Kennst du es wohl?* (do you really know it?) are set differently rhythmically than all the other lines. These are set with a half note on beat one each time on the word *kennst*, emphasizing the questioning, “do you know?” These words are also repeated one time before moving on, which further emphasizes Mignon’s pleading. The other phrases all begin on weak beats and are of different lengths. The first four lines of text (20 poetic feet) fill eighteen bars of music and are then followed by sixteen bars of music setting the last nine poetic feet, with repeats of text. The original text is expanded thus: *Dahin, dahin möchte ich mit Dir, mit Dir, O mein Geliebter ziehn, dahin mit dir, o mein Geliebter ziehn* (additions in italics). The balance of the poem is changed through this repetition of text, along with the fact that the musical setting of the poetic feet quickens at this point (m. 26), becoming two stresses to the bar instead of just one as earlier in the piece.

Hensel crafts a melody around leaps of intervals of a fourth between A4<sup>52</sup> and D5. Starting in m. five the voice sings an ascending fourth on the words *das Land*. The next phrase reverses the same interval, again on *das Land*. As the melody moves into the dominant (E major) the same relationship occurs on *ein sanfter* (a gentle) in mm. 14 and 15, this time from dominant (B4) up to tonic (E5). Moving

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<sup>52</sup> The note naming system used in this paper is scientific pitch notation (also known as American Standard) in which middle C is C4 and notes are numbered in the octave (C to C) in which they occur.

into C minor at m. 18 the words *Kennst Du es wohl?* outline a descending fourth between tonic (C-sharp<sup>5</sup>) and dominant (G-sharp<sup>4</sup>). The song moves back into the key of A again with a dominant tonality in m. 24 leading to the tonic in m. 27. Now begins a preponderance of sixths in the melody starting in m. 26 with a descending leap from E<sup>5</sup> to G-sharp<sup>4</sup> on *Dahin, dahin* (there, there), then in mm. 27-8 on *mit dir* (with you) (A<sup>4</sup> –F-sharp<sup>5</sup>) and then descending through the phrase to end with A<sup>4</sup> on *zieh'n* (go, move) in bar 30. The last phrase also encompasses a descending sixth as a scalar passage from F-sharp<sup>5</sup> down to A<sup>4</sup> on *o mein Geliebter ziehn* (o my beloved go). The use of leaps creates a reaching quality in the melody that matches the text well.

### *An Suleika*

A simple four-line poem from Goethe's *Westöstlicher Divan* is the basis for one of Fanny Hensel's best lieder, a jewel-like setting of 35 bars, through-composed in the key of E-flat major. The poem comes from the last major collection of poetry written by Goethe in 1814-15 and published in 1819. Hensel's version was written in 1825, when she was 20 years old, just six years after the collection's publication. In fact, "Fanny's six other Goethe settings from 1825 were all inspired by the *Westöstlicher Divan*, the celebrated anthology seething with an irrepressible exoticism and sensuality barely contained within some 250 poems."<sup>53</sup> This *divan* or collection was based on inspiration from the works of a fourteenth century Persian

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<sup>53</sup> Todd, *Fanny Hensel*, 93.

poet named Hafiz and also an intense letter-writing relationship between Goethe and Marianne von Willemer, a married thirty year old woman from Wiesbaden. In this set of poems, Goethe tried to find his own “new style that would be post-classical and quasi-oriental.”<sup>54</sup> This poem was written in a very regular form, which was expanded upon by Fanny, to make a lied that expresses the shock of memory of a loved one who is far away. The poem consists of four iambic tetrameter lines with an abba rhyme form:

Auch in der Ferne dir so nah!  
Und unerwartet kommt die Qual.  
Da hör ich wieder dich einmal,  
Auf einmal bist du wieder da!<sup>55</sup>

By numbering the lines of the poem one can see how Hensel expanded it. The first half of the song (16 bars) sets the lines: 1,2,1,2,3,(*auf einmal, auf einmal*),4; thus working one time through the full text. The second half of the lied sets the text so: 1,1,2,2,3,4,4, plus three bars of piano postlude. Although the second part of the lied begins with the first line of text, it is not an AA' or strophic form, rather the music is through-composed. The unifying material is the melody which sets each repetition of the first line *Auch in der Ferne dir so nah* (Even far away I am so close to you). (See example 1.)

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<sup>54</sup> Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Selected Poetry*, trans. David Luke (London: Libris, 1999), xxxv.

<sup>55</sup> Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Goethe's Werke*, Vol. 2, 6<sup>th</sup> ed. (Hamburg: Christian Wegner Verlag, 1962), 76.

Figure 1. From Fanny Hensel, "An Suleika"<sup>56</sup>

The figure displays three systems of musical notation for Fanny Hensel's "An Suleika". Each system includes a vocal line (treble clef) and a piano accompaniment (grand staff). The key signature is three flats (B-flat, E-flat, A-flat) and the time signature is 3/4.

**System 1 (mm. 1-3):** The vocal line begins with the lyrics "Auch in der Fer - ne dir so nah!". The piano accompaniment features a steady eighth-note bass line. Roman numeral harmonization below the piano part indicates the sequence: Eb: I, vi, V, I.

**System 2 (mm. 5-7):** The vocal line continues with the lyrics "Qual. Auch in der Fer - ne dir so nah!". The piano accompaniment continues with similar rhythmic patterns. Roman numeral harmonization below the piano part indicates: I, vi, V<sup>7</sup>/V, V.

**System 3 (mm. 17-21):** The vocal line has the lyrics "Auch in der Fer - ne dir so nah! Auch in der Fer - ne dir so nah!". The piano accompaniment shows more complex harmonic textures. Roman numeral harmonization below the piano part indicates: I, vi, ii, V, I, v, bVI<sup>#6</sup>, i.

**System 4 (mm. 33-35):** This system shows the vocal line with rests. The piano accompaniment continues. Roman numeral harmonization below the piano part indicates: V<sup>7</sup>/IV, IV, V<sup>7</sup>, I.

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<sup>56</sup> Fanny Hensel, "An Suleika," in *Ausgewählte Lieder für Singstimme und Klavier*. Vol. 2. Edited by Annette Maurer (Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel, 1993), 18-19.

Each of the first three repetitions of this phrase begins with an outlined ascending E-flat major chord, which after landing on E-flat<sup>5</sup> on *Ferne*, descends in a different way. The first statement descends supported by C minor (vi) changing to V-I. The second time (mm. five and six) the penultimate note is changed to A natural supported by a V<sup>7</sup>/V leading to B-flat supported by V. The third statement is at the beginning of the second part of the song (mm. 17 and 18) and the melody changes one note earlier on the word *dir* to A-flat and then outlines the dominant and ends with a fermata. This statement is the high point of expression of the sentiment of the song. Directly following this statement is the fourth and final statement of this text, this time employing modal borrowing with *Ferne* supported by a C-flat major chord, a very distantly related tonality (bVI). The original melodic line of *Auch in der Ferne dir so nah* is repeated as a postlude to the song, but this time is supported by a secondary dominant to IV, followed by IV-V<sup>7</sup>-I, a resigned echo to the upheaval of the preceding iterations.

Other aspects of the song, which support the overall expression, are the preponderance of secondary diminished seventh chords (a favorite of Hensel's) and the fact that every phrase begins on an upbeat. Set in triple meter, the majority (ten) phrases begin on the half of 2, with only 2 beginning on beat 3 and 3 beginning on an eighth note upbeat to the following bar. This 'upbeat' design accomplishes two things. First it puts more stress on the second stressed word in the poem, especially the word *Ferne* in line one and *wartet* of *unerwartet* (unexpectedly) in line two. The second result of starting each phrase on the upbeat gives the words a breathless

motion of longing that is quite effective. In this lied Hensel crafted a very expressive reading of the poem in a small space.

*Ist es möglich, Stern der Sterne*

Written on July 13 in the same year as “An Suleika,” this as of yet unpublished lied<sup>57</sup> sets the first strophe only of a longer poem also from the *Westöstlicher Divan*, a work that Hensel revisited several times in 1825. From the six-strophe poem Hensel set only the first strophe, and while one cannot be sure why she didn’t set more, the 22 bar setting seems abrupt in its ending. However, by looking at the poem itself certain difficulties become clear. Entitled “Wiederfinden” this poem starts in the first strophe with a personal cry to the beloved, which is then followed by four very philosophical strophes about creation and God ending with another personal statement by the lover. The poem itself has garnered discussion because of its form. Edwin Zeydel describes it thus: “The first and last stanzas apply directly to him and Marianne, while the rest of the poem offers a picture of Creation, with the planets and all the elements in mad confusion, until God created light and the colors of the prism.”<sup>58</sup> Gray evaluates this dichotomy by stating that “too often Goethe would allow a poem to tail off into triviality, or into a kind of shorthand statement of beliefs and attitudes which may well have appeared coherent to him, but whose

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<sup>57</sup> Fanny Hensel, *Ist es möglich, Stern der Sterne*, in Mendelssohn Archiv MS. 35, page 23.

<sup>58</sup> Edwin H. Zeydel, *Poems of Goethe: A sequel to “Goethe the Lyrist,”* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1957), 10.



connection one with another is not made clear to the reader.”<sup>59</sup> Speaking directly to this poem he states: “When as many gaps appear between the thought of one verse and that of the next as there are in ‘Das Göttliche’ and ‘Wiederfinden’, it is not surprising if poems containing striking rhythms and phrases end by leaving a sense of dissatisfaction.”<sup>60</sup> Perhaps Hensel also found it difficult to continue the setting of the poem, or always meant only to set the first, more personal strophe.

Hensel’s through-composed setting is marked *allegro vivace* and is in C major, a rather low tessitura compared to most of her other pieces. It has a very wide vocal range encompassing an octave plus a minor 6<sup>th</sup>, giving it an almost hysterical feel. She divides the eight lines into two uneven sections (six lines and 2 lines). The poem is in trochaic tetrameter throughout, but Hensel sets the first six lines (speaking of longing for the beloved) starting on the fourth beat, deemphasizing the first stressed word and giving each line a distinct forward emphasis. This changes in m. 16 with the setting of lines 7 (repeated once) and line 8, which are set very squarely with each stressed syllable on beat one and three. The longing of the lover has changed to the memory of past love, and as Gray says “remembering what suffering love has caused him before, he knows that it will bring not only joys but also ‘Leiden’, at the thought of which he shudders.”<sup>61</sup> The setting of *shaudr’ich vor der Gegenwart* is a musical shudder, an explosive ascending line from

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<sup>59</sup> Ronald Gray, *Poems of Goethe: A Selection* (London: Cambridge University Press, 1966), xxix.

<sup>60</sup> *Ibid.*, xxviii.

<sup>61</sup> *Ibid.*, 163.

G4 up to F5 before quickly descending to the leading tone and ending on C5. The harmony under the voice in m. 20 is a distinctive common tone diminished seventh chord leading to V7 that resolves to I in m. 21. Whether Hensel meant this to be an exercise or a finished work, it again shows her ability to use rhythm and harmony to express emotion.

### *Mignon*

There are at least 56 settings of this poem<sup>62</sup> (also known as “Nur wer die Sehnsucht kennt”) that appears as a song sung by Mignon in *Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre*. This is a typical romantic poem that lends itself to a lied setting. As Harry Seelig writes:

Romantic literature sees man’s actions and behavior as primarily governed by inner energies and emotions...These characteristics infuse the specifically Romantic poems chosen by most lied composers, but they are especially prominent in Goethe’s lyrics. ‘Nur wer die Sehnsucht kennt,’ one of the four Mignon songs from *Wilhelm Meister*, embodies in astonishingly concentrated lyrical form the proto-Romantic emotional fervor and self-awareness.<sup>63</sup>

The poem expresses the theme of endless suffering in absence of home. Goethe wrote twelve lines, the last two identical with the first two: *Nur wer die Sehnsucht kennt, Weiss, was ich leide!* (Only he, who knows longing, knows what I suffer.) The rhyme scheme is ab throughout (if Goethe’s Frankfurt accent is taken into account, making *leide* rhyme, for example, with *Weite* and *Freude*), with each set

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<sup>62</sup> Stein, *Poem and Music in the German Lied*, 35.

<sup>63</sup> Seelig, “The Literary Context,” 9.

of two lines enjambed to form one sentence. The regular form adds to the sense of the hopelessness of the words.

Rather than treating the repeat of the first two lines at the end of the poem with a musical structure that repeats or returns, Hensel set this poem as a through-composed 34 bar lied in G minor. There are several arches reflected in the music that can be seen as a reaching out in longing without success. The first arch is the key structure. It moves from G minor to the relative major (E-flat) in m. 9 and then returns to G minor at the end, signifying a lack of success. Another arch is seen in the last statement of the poem in mm. 28-32. The words *Nur wer die Sehnsucht kennt* are set as a rising arpeggio reaching the highest note in the song, A-flat<sup>5</sup> on *Sehnsucht* (longing). The line slowly descends to the ending A<sup>4</sup> and G<sup>4</sup> on *leide* (suffer). The high note on *Sehnsucht* in m. 29 is the end of a rising arch of pitches beginning with D<sup>5</sup> as the first note of the song, rising to E-flat<sup>5</sup> (m. 10) at the beginning of the 5<sup>th</sup> line of text, rising again on the word *Weite* in m. 18. This arch rises slowly, but descends quickly in mm. 31-32 to end the song. Other individual lines also reflect this arch motif, see especially *Allein und abgetrennt von aller Freude* (alone and separated from all joy) in mm. 6-9. The arch appears also on the level of phrase length. The musical phrases of the voice are of uneven length and follow the pattern (of bars) of: 3,2,4,4,6,4,3,2. This is again an arch pattern that has its peak in the six-measure line *Ach, der mich liebt und kennt, ist in der Weite* (ah, he who loves me is far away).

As in many of Hensel's most successful lieder, the accompaniment here does not often double the voice, but supports it through constant eighth note action, much of it arpeggiation in the right hand. There is a preponderance of chromaticism in the voice, most successfully moving by descending half step as in mm. 2-3, 23-24 and 29-30.

This setting is very different from the well-known settings by Schumann and Tchaikovsky, both of whom lengthen the poem by repeating major portions of the text. Schubert also repeats some text in all four of his solo settings of this poem which range from 38 to 50 bars long. (He also wrote a duet version.) Although Hensel uses that device in other of her lieder, here her only repetition comes in mm. 22-27 where she repeats the words *es brennt, es brennt, mein Eingeweide* (it burns, it burns, my insides). This allows her setting to better retain the starkness of the original poem.

*Wenn ich mir in stiller Seele, First Version*<sup>64</sup>

This was the only known setting by Fanny Hensel of the poem written for her by Goethe, until 2011, when another setting was found by Klein (see above, pp. 13-15) The two versions are very different and deserve their own analyses. The poem itself consists of eight lines of trochaic tetrameter with a silent weak beat at the ending of every second line and enjambment between each set of 2 lines. The rhyme

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<sup>64</sup> Fanny Hensel, "Wenn ich mir in stiller Seele," in *Von Goethe inspiriert: Lieder von Komponistinnen des 18. Und 19. Jahrhunderts*, ed. Ann Willison Lemke (Kassel: Furore Verlag, 1999), 10-11.

scheme is ababcdcd. It is a poem of longing and hope, drawing a picture of song bursting from the soul. There are several instances of alliteration: *stiller Seele* (silent soul), *leise Lieder* (soft songs), *fühle dass sie fehle* (feel her absence), and *einzig mir erkor* (only chosen one for me). Following is the text of the poem, which is produced as a facsimile in *Von Goethe Inspiriert*.

Wenn ich mir in stiller Seele  
 Singe leise Lieder vor,  
 Wie ich fühle daß sie fehle  
 Die ich einzig mir erkor,  
 Möcht ich hoffen daß sie sänge  
 Was ich ihr so gern vertraut,  
 Ach! Aus dieser Brust und Enge  
 Drängen frohe Lieder laut.<sup>65</sup>

For this setting, composed on January 19 of 1828, Hensel uses through-composed form and moves from D minor through the subdominant to end in D major, implying a positive reading of the poem. The most interesting aspect of this setting is the division of sentiment into three sections: the first two lines, then the four middle lines, and ending with the last two lines. The outer sections refer to the speaker himself (first line: “When I softly sing songs in the silence of my soul,” and last line: “Oh, out of the confinement of this heart are pressed loud songs of joy.”), while the middle section speaks of the beloved (“How I feel her absence, the only chosen one for me, I would hope that she would be singing what I entrusted to her.”). The first two lines are set in one large melodic arch encompassing a sixth

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<sup>65</sup> Ibid., 11.

(from A4 to F5 and back). The lines are set squarely in common time meter, each beginning on beat one. The setting of the next four lines changes in several ways. First, each line begins on beat three (except for m. 11 where *die ich einzig* begins on beat two). The harmony modulates through G minor (mm. 8-15) and then into D major (in m. 16) where it stays to the end of the song. The accompaniment also changes from homophonic to eighth note arpeggiations beginning on the line *möcht ich hoffen* where the poet longs for what he is unsure of. Line six (*was ich ihr so gern vertraut*), which is only one of two that is repeated in this song, ends on an eight-beat A4 in the voice on the second *traut* under which the piano erupts with chords on the dominant. The last two lines start on beat one of m. 21 and the melody rises to a held A5 on *frohe*, which descends through an arpeggio to end on D4. The piano supports the last two lines with sixteenth-note arpeggios, matching the excitement of the melody. Although this setting is rather charming, it seems a bit clumsy in its execution, perhaps because of the changing accompaniment or the great difference between the mood from the beginning of the piece to the end. It does not succeed as completely as some of her other lieder.

*Wenn ich mir in stiller Seele, Second Version*<sup>66</sup>

This setting, much more intimate and circumscribed than the one described previously, has an entirely different tone and seems to be an entirely different reading of the poem. Since she wrote these two lieder most probably within months

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<sup>66</sup> Klein, "Wenn ich mir in stiller Seele...", 120-121.

of each other, their differences show a great versatility as well as creativity.

Consisting of twenty-six bars in E-flat major, this version is through-composed and is marked *andante con espressione*. The most noticeable attribute of this song is the use of upper appoggiatura and suspension figures throughout, producing a drooping melodic motion. This occurs even when the melody is slowly moving upwards, such as in mm. 17-20 where the movement is from E-flat<sup>5</sup> through F<sup>5</sup> to G<sup>5</sup>, but the melody falls downward immediately each time. Looking more closely at the melodic movement we see that the tessitura through out the song remains rather narrow, usually within the confines of the staff, even though the range of the voice is an octave and a fourth. The first two lines of text are set in a four-bar phrase (starting on beat two in triple meter) that essentially elaborates B-flat<sup>4</sup>. The next two lines of text are set in five bars of music starting on beat three (with repetition of the words *die ich einzig*) and consist of four drooping figures. Lines five and six of text are set with six bars of music (again starting with an upbeat on beat three) and contain suspensions on the words *möcht* and *dass*. This phrase is followed directly by the setting of the last two lines of text in six and a half bars which reach upwards (as described above) and then outline a descending triad on the tonic in mm. 21-23 (*frohe Lieder laut*). The accompaniment is hymn-like and adds to the solemn feeling of the song, even though it is in a major key.

If, as Klein puts forth in his article, this is the version that Fanny Hensel sent as a gift to Goethe, it raises questions about why she thought this was the better setting. Was it because it is more unified and simple? Was this version simply

finished first and sent before she tried to set the poem a second time? These are interesting questions, the answers to which might give us more insight into Hensel's ideas about composition and her views of poetry.

### *Wonne der Wehmut*

Written at some point between 1828 and 1833<sup>67</sup>, Hensel's setting of Goethe's "Wonne der Wehmut" (Joy of Melancholy) is striking in its difference from her other settings. The mostly homophonic setting of 32 bars in G minor paints a clearly more melancholy than joyful setting where the voice never rests on the note G supported by the tonic chord until the last word. It is important to note that there are two text changes. The first, in which the words *ewigen* (eternal) and *unglücklichen* (unhappy) trade places, is very interesting. These two words form the structure of the poem and changing their position shifts their emphasis. Perhaps she was setting the poem from memory and simply exchanged them. On the other hand, the rather dour setting could imply that she meant for the unlucky aspect of love to be present through out the song. The other text change occurs in the fourth line of the poem, exchanging *kalt* (cold) for *öde* (dreary). Easier to sing, it matches the rhythm of the entire phrase.

#### Wonne der Wehmut (Goethe)

Trocknet nicht, trocknet nicht,  
Tränen der **ewigen** Liebe!  
Ach, nur dem halbgetrockneten Auge

#### Wonne der Wehmut (Hensel)

Trocknet nicht, trocknet nicht  
Tränen **unglücklicher** Liebe! Trocknet nicht!  
Ach, nur dem halbgetrockneten Auge

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<sup>67</sup> Annette Maurer, *Thematisches Verzeichnis*, 175.



Wie öde, wie tot die Welt ihm erscheint!	Wie kalt, wie tot die Welt ihm erscheint.
Trocknet nicht, trocknet nicht,	Trocknet nicht, Trocknet nich
Tränen <b>unglücklicher</b> Liebe! <sup>68</sup>	Tränen der <b>ewigen, ewigen</b> Liebe! <sup>69</sup>

The form of this song is through-composed but with similar material setting the first two lines and last two lines, giving it a circular feeling. The melody forms a small arch in the first eight bars with accented notes rising and falling D5-Eflat5-F5-Eflat5-C5. The center section (mm. 13-21) which moves into the subdominant key of C minor is also a rising melodic arch moving from G4-Aflat4-Bflat4-C5-D5-Eflat5-F#4 (displaced an octave) which leads to the downward melodic movement on the last two lines, over a half-diminished seventh chord acting as the pivot back to G minor. Hensel also uses non-chord tones in the melody to set the word *nicht* (not) three of the five times it appears in the song (mm. 2, 23 and 25). This is always an A in the voice over a iv chord, which adds to the melancholy of the piece. While Hensel does not exploit the duality of this poem (joy and melancholy, eternal and unhappy love), through the weeping arches of melody and the subdued accompaniment she has produced a convincing moment of melancholy.

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<sup>68</sup> Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, *Gesammelte Gedichte* (Königswinter: Edition Lempertz GmbH, 2006), 116.

<sup>69</sup> Fanny Hensel manuscript (Konvult, 1828-1833) MA Depos. Lohs 4, (Berlin: Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin – Preussischer Kulturbesitz, Musikabteilung mit Mendelssohn-Archiv), 77.

*Neue Liebe, Neues Leben*

In “Neue Liebe, Neues Leben” Hensel found an exuberantly expressive poem to set. Goethe wrote it in spring of 1775 when he was considering getting engaged to Lili Schönemann. He eventually did get engaged, but the relationship was broken off before marriage occurred. The poem reflects his quandary at that time: whether he was ready to marry the woman he loved. “He loves her dearly, yet his sense of loyalty to himself bids him desist...He dreaded his own fickleness, but also his loss of freedom. He felt he was not ready for marriage – and indeed we may wonder whether he ever was.”<sup>70</sup> The resulting poem consists of three eight-line strophes with a typical *rispetto* rhyme of ababccdd. Goethe used this Tuscan verse form from the Renaissance to give the *Sturm und Drang* sentiment a specific shape.

Hensel set this poem in 1836 using a form rare to her lied settings: the rondo. By using this form, key relationships and melodic invention, she was able to paint a charming picture of a young man’s dilemma, and in this setting it is clear that love wins out. The poem and the ensuing lied is longer than most of Hensel’s settings, comprising 77 bars. The form is a rondo: ABACA coda with a harmonic structure of I – iii – I – vi – I in B-flat major. The first four lines of strophe one and two are set with A (8 bars), but in the third strophe A returns only for the last four lines of text. This means that the B section consists of the last four lines of strophe one, while C

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<sup>70</sup> Edwin H. Zeydel, *Goethe, the Lyrist: 100 Poems in New Translations facing the Originals with a Biographical Introduction*, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1955), 7.

consists of eight lines: the last four of strophe two and the first four of strophe three. C is also the longest, comprised of 30 bars of music. With the division of the poem into these musical sections Hensel has increased the duality of the poem. The texts of the A sections all contain positive sentiments about the beloved, from the *liebliche Gestalt* (lovely appearance) and *Blick voll Treu und Güte* (gaze full of loyalty and goodness) in the second strophe to giving in to living in her magic spell (*Zauberkreise*) in the last strophe. The B section bemoans the fact that peace is gone and all is changed when one is in love. In C the poet speaks of how the lover cannot escape the magic threads (*Zauberfädchen*) that can't be broken. But he gives in to her in the musical return of A, which flows into an exuberant coda where he pleads (without hope of success) for love to let him go (*Liebe, laß mich los*).

In addition to form and key, Hensel uses melody to show the different moods of the speaker throughout the poem. The A sections are set with four 2-bar phrases of an antecedent-consequent nature; each phrase beginning on beat three. (In fact, almost all phrases in the song begin on beat three of common time, which gives the entire piece the buoyant, excited feeling of a young man in love.) The B section is a melodic elaboration of movement from C5 to D5 with the harmony beneath moving from V of B-flat to D minor (iii). This rather static melody expresses his complaint. After repeat of the A section the elongated C begins. By m. 28 the tonality is shifting from B-flat major to the relative minor. Measure 30 is the first instance of a melodic figure D5-Bflat4-A4-G4 that is repeated numerous times until the cadence on beat one of m. 41. This motive signifies the repetition of trying to

escape the beloved's pull, without success. Now the sentiment intensifies with the words 'and on these thin threads that cannot tear' (*und an diesem zarten Fädchen, das sich nicht zerreißen läßt*) and Hensel changes the melody to two-bar-long arches from mm. 41-49. Here is the high point of the lied with the words 'the loveable, mischievous girl holds me against my will' (*halt das liebe, lose Mädchen mich so wider Willen fest*). Hensel slows the poetic meter here, changing it for the only time in the whole song in mm. 50-55 where the stressed syllables are only one to a bar, instead of two. There is also a melismatic passage on *Mädchen mich so wider* that makes it stand out musically and calls to mind the 'tug of war' for the young man with the source of his problem: the girl. Suddenly, the music shifts back to A (in B-flat major) which is then extended by a nine bar coda repeating the words *Liebe, Liebe lass mich los* (love, love, let me go), however this plea is less than genuine being cheerfully in B-flat. This setting is a charming and effective reflection of the young Goethe's poem.

### *Sehnsucht*

The poem *Sehnsucht*, written in 1802, during Goethe's Weimar Classicism period has a strict form and a classical Greek theme. Hensel's setting from 1839 (February 2) uses a modified strophic form in order to successfully illuminate the poem without overpowering its own inherent shape. The poem itself consists of five strophes of eight dimeter lines. The couplets all have a first line containing two amphibrach feet and a second line (all with a strong sense of enjambment)

containing an amphibrach foot followed by an iambic foot. The subject of the poem is the ancient myth of Cupid and Psyche. In this case Cupid is the lover driven to the beloved through the first three strophes. In the fourth strophe the sun sets, which allows the lovers to come together (according to the myth) and in the fifth the lover has become a gleaming star (*blinkender Stern*).

Hensel supports the form and content of the poem not only through the modified strophic form, but also through the harmonic schema and choice of 6/8 meter. The form she chose supports the formal form (*Gestalt*) and the dramatic movement (*Gehalt*) of the poem. The first and second strophes are set to the same music, the third is identical up to the last line of text (mm. 45-52), the fourth has entirely new melodic material and the fifth returns to the original melodic material and leads into a 22 bar coda. The only textual modifications Hensel makes are to repeat the last line of each strophe twice and repeat text from the fifth strophe to form the coda. The harmonic schema is also very interesting in this piece. It consists of interplay between the relative keys of B minor and D major, which can be seen as starting in i (B minor) and ending in III (D major), or more satisfyingly as starting in vi (B) and ending in I (D). If that is the case the schema for the entire piece looks like this:

Verse:	1 and 2	3	4	5	6
Key areas:	vi(b) – I (D)	vi – I – vi – ii	ii – I – ii	ii – vi – I	I

The choice of 6/8 meter throughout supports the amphibrach feet by putting the stressed syllables consistently on the first beats of the bars. This continues without change until the coda, where in mm. 101-104 the rhythm of the repeated *bin ich beglückt* (I am happy) is playfully altered each time. In the rest of the coda there is a slowing of the syllabic stress to once every other bar, building in a natural ending to the piece.

Aside from the formal elements of the setting it is interesting to look more closely at Hensel's choice of melodic material. The melody gallops (marked *allegro con spirito*) through the 6/8 meter in verses 1,2,3 and 5 with each phrase starting with an ascending or descending leap. The repeats of the last line of each strophe are set with exuberant rising and falling arpeggios. The contrast then, with the more static melody line in verse four is very stark. This verse, a moment of transition (the setting of the sun in the poem) is set in the key of E minor (supertonic) and ends with a fermata on B natural over a V7/B minor chord. This is an effective moment of expectation leading to the return of the original melody and the dénouement of the lied.

### *Hausgarten*

Appearing first in a late work (1821) of Goethe's called *Radierten Blätter nach Handzeichnungen von Goethe*, this poem expresses, from a mature standpoint, the artistic rhythm of discovery in the world and the subsequent homecoming to a quiet place where one can work through the experiences. As Gisela Müller and Viola

Hildebrand-Schat state in their article about this song setting: “And nevertheless it appears that artistic work can only take place in alternation with times of deep concentration.”<sup>71</sup> This dichotomy of discovery abroad and artistic creation at home gave Hensel a source of inspiration for a lied to express the experiences she had during her first Italian journey. Although it is not clear exactly when Hensel wrote it, she performed it for friends on July 13, 1840 in Naples<sup>72</sup> and the first written copy that exists comes from the *Reise-Album 1839-40* (travel album) that she and her husband Wilhelm put together after their homecoming. This journey, long awaited, was a creative boost for Hensel as she expressed in her journal on June first, 1840: “I have an eternal, everlasting picture in my soul, that will never fade with time.”<sup>73</sup> Thus her return to the proscribed private life in Berlin was enriched, the expression of which can be seen in this lied.

The poem, written in a strict (old fashioned) iambic pentameter is one strophe with eight lines. The rhyme scheme is aabbccdd and the last two lines have feminine endings. Hensel keeps this very regular feeling in her setting in common time in G major, which is through-composed, but has very regular phrases and a

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<sup>71</sup> Gisela Müller and Viola Hildebrand-Schat, “Goethe hat mich auf dieser Reise nicht verlassen’: Das letzte Lied in Fanny und Wilhelm Hensels *Reise-Album 1839-40*,” in *Jahrbuch des Staatlichen Instituts für Musikforschung Preussischer Kulturbesitz 2003* (Stuttgart: Verlag J.B. Metzler: 2003), 192. In original: “Und dennoch scheint sich künstlerisches Tätigsein nur im Wechsel zu umgrenzter Konzentration vollziehen zu können.”

<sup>72</sup> Hans-Günter Klein and Rudolf Elvers, ed. *Fanny Hensel Tagebücher* (Wiesbaden: Breitkopf & Härtel, 2002), 174.

<sup>73</sup> Ibid., 141. In original: “Aber ich habe ein ewiges, unvergängliches Bild in der Seele, das vor keener Zeit verblassen wird.”

style which is charming but very conservative. This is seen in the accompaniment, which is homophonic and often doubles the voice. Lines one through six comprise the first half of the song and are set with two bars of music each, with lines five and six repeated. Starting in G major, there is a move to C major when the poem turns in bar nine to 'going through foreign lands' (*durch fremde Lande ziehn*). But it is short-lived and by bar 12 we are back in G major on 'we come again back here' (*dort kehrt es wieder hin*). The second half of the lied sets the last two lines of text, extending it through repetition and also by extending the last line of poetry to six bars of music with a melisma on the word *beglücke* (makes happy). Then Hensel adds closure to the sentiment by repeating the first line with the same musical material, but shifted two beats, putting the last word, *Haus* (home), on the downbeat. In this way she musically returns home, just as the artist in the poem must return home to renew her creativity. Although this lied does not itself move too far afield, it is a charming expression of a return to the quiet corner of home.

It is interesting to note several small changes Hensel made to Goethe's poem. First she changed several words. It is unclear whether this was totally intentional or came from composing from memory, but they are significant enough to mention. First, the word *denn* (then) is changed to *nun* (now) in line one, a word change more than a sense change, which could just be for ease of singing. In line five she changes *ferne* (far away) to *fremde* (foreign), which again is not a large change, but does seem to imply a larger distance from 'home'. The last change is in line six where *da* becomes *dort*, an insignificant change in regards to meaning in this context. The



other change Hensel makes is to set the first word of lines one and six, *hier* (here) and *dort* (there), on the first beat of the bar, the only time she breaks from the iambic flow. This again serves to show the alternation of moving away from and back to home. Another way she emphasizes this is through her use of markings, a rather rare occurrence in her lieder. She uses dynamic markings through out the song to emphasize expressive movement. The lied begins marked piano with the first crescendo marking in m. ten leading to forte in m. 11 on *dort kommt es her* changing suddenly to piano again in m. 13. There is another crescendo-forte-diminuendo in the next three bars with the repeated text. From mm. 17-26 it is mostly marked piano but there are crescendo-descrescendos marked in mm. 17-18 and 22. The last *allein beglücke* is marked forte and is followed by the last line of the lied marked piano. Happiness is found in the return to home.

### *Dämmerung senkte sich von oben*

The setting of Goethe's "Dämmerung senkte sich von oben" was written by Hensel in August of 1843. It is a late poem of Goethe's written after he had read a number of Chinese poems. It appears in his *Chinesisch-deutsche Tages- und Jahreszeiten*, which was influenced by his exposure to Asian poetry in translation. It has two strophes, each with eight lines and expresses the uncertainty, but also serenity, of the time around sunset. The first strophe deals with the setting of the sun (twilight) and the second with the rising of the moon. There is a dichotomy in the poem through the movement of day to night, but also a stillness in observation

of the movement of nature around oneself. Goethe deftly uses a thickness of consonant sounds to create this bewitching serenity. Examples are lines seven and eight of the first strophe: *Schwarzvertiefte Finsternisse* (black depth eclipses), *Widerspiegelnd ruht der See* (reflecting, rests the lake), and line six of strophe two: *Zittert Lunas Zauberschein* (trembles Luna's magic glow). Spoken, the pace of this poem cannot be overly fast; it has a certain stasis not only from the meaning of the words, but also from the words themselves.

Hensel crafts a setting that supports this stasis and the serene scene it evokes. She chooses to use a strophic form and sets the piece in D major with no modulations, but with colorful chords. The melody suits the first strophe better than the second, however the repetition helps craft the mood. The setting is eighteen bars that divide into two even sections. The first section sets four lines of text with a chromatic melody that slowly ascends with twists and turns from F-sharp4 to F-sharp5 at the high point in m. six (on *emporgehoben* (lifted)) and then returns downwards to G-sharp4. These lines all start on beat three or four of common time, already seen as a way Hensel moves a phrase forward. This changes in the second section of the lied, from bars nine to the end where the phrases are set more statically on the first beat of the bars. Bars nine and ten use chromaticism around C-sharp5 in the melody to show the *ungewisse* (uncertainty) of the text. Beneath this melody line is a shifting harmony from D major to V-I in A major (m. nine) quickly moving to F major and then through modal borrowing becoming F minor. This expands into an arpeggiated melody ascending in m. 12 undergirded with an

enharmonic pun: a diminished vii chord which shifts the tonality from F minor back to the tonic of D major in m. 13. Following are arpeggios descending in mm. 13, 14, and 15, to end on two bars of A4 (on the words *ruht der See* (rests the lake)). The arpeggiations of bars 13-15 occur over the harmonic movement of I-IV7-I, simply reiterating D major. These arpeggiations serve to highlight the colorful sounds of the German text, giving them parity with the melodic material.

Again, in this setting we have a number of markings from Hensel. The beginning is marked *andante con moto* and *piano*. There is a crescendo on beat four of m. four leading to a *forte* at the melodic high point of the song, with a decrescendo marked directly after at the end of m. six. The next crescendo is on beat four of m. 11 leading to *forte* in m. 12 and a *diminuendo* in m. 13. The piece ends with a marking of *pp* in the voice at *ruht der See*. This mature setting by Hensel shows again her willingness to match the setting to the needs of the poem, whether through form, melody or rhythm.

### *Conclusion*

As the previous analyses show, Fanny Hensel used a variety of tools to bring out the expressiveness of the poetry she set. The variety with which she set Goethe's poems reaches from the charmingly youthful setting of "Sehnsucht nach Italien," through the yearning "Mignon," the finely spun reverie of "An Suleika," the exuberant rondo of "Neue Liebe, Neues Leben," to the stark and hymnlike "Wonne der Wehmut" and the mature, reflective beauty of "Hausgarten."

This current study, while illuminating Hensel's approach to lieder setting, especially of Goethe's lyric poetry, is merely a beginning to the work of in-depth study of her compositions. Further study of her settings of Goethe poetry will continue to inform not only our understanding of her style, but also Goethe's impact on the composers of his time. While the largest numbers of her settings are to poems by Goethe, she also set a number by Ludwig Tieck, Eichendorff, Heine and Hölty. Taking into account the variety of methods she used in setting Goethe poetry, it would be interesting to research the impact other poets had on her creativity.

Her works form an important portion (numbering over 250) of early romantic lieder, showing a link from Zelter and the Second Berlin School to the full-blown works of Franz Schubert, Clara Schumann and Robert Schumann. She was favorably positioned at a time when her creativity could be used to develop methods of expressing the emotion inherent in the wealth of available romantic lyric poetry. She brought a number of expressive tools to her work as a composer. Her ability to use choice of form, melodic invention, harmonic coloration and freedom with the text in service to the poetry produced interesting, expressive lieder. Although unrecognized during her lifetime and only seriously considered from the 1980's onward, her works show the development of the through-composed form and a robust melodic inventiveness.

Further research can and should be done not only of her Goethe works, but also comprehensively on her lieder output as a whole to discover similarities and differences in her settings of poems from various composers. This research will be

helped by further publication of works that are either no longer available or have never been published. Her works also form a welcome addition to art song repertoire and should take their place on recitals, including, but not limited to, programs of German lieder and works by female composers. More published access to her works will facilitate this. Continued attention to Fanny Hensel's lieder, through research, publication and performance, will enrich the understanding of nineteenth century song.

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APPENDIX A

SELECTED GOETHE LIEDER BY FANNY HENSEL

Song title	Date	Poem title and date	Key	Form	MS source	Published sources
Sehnsucht nach Italien	8/16/1822	Kennst du das Land (1795)	A major	through-composed	MA Ms. 32 p. 44-45	Assenbaum, 1991 (in transposition) Assenbaum, 1998 (in G major) p. 5-7
An Suleika	4/25/1825	Auch in die Ferne dir so nah! (1819)	E-flat major	through-composed	MA Ms. 35 p. 15-16	Maurer, book 2 1993
Ist es möglich, Stern der Sterne	7/13/1825	Wiederfinden (1814)	C major	through-composed	MA Ms. 35 p. 23	Appendix 2
Mignon	7/12/1826	Nur wer die Sehnsucht kennt (1785)	G minor	through-composed	MA Ms. 35 p. 55	Assenbaum, 1991 (in transposition) Rieger/Walter, 1992 p. 30-31 Assenbaum, 1998 (in E minor, p. 8-9)
Wenn ich mir in stiller Seele	1/19/1828	Wenn ich mir (1827)	D minor/ D major	through-composed	MA Depos. Lohs 2 p.16	Lemke, 1999 p.10-11
Wenn ich mir in stiller Seele	1828?	Wenn ich mir (1827)	E-flat major	through-composed	Goethe-Schiller Archive	Klein, 2011 p.120-121
Wonne der Wehmut	1828-33	Wonne der Wehmut (1775)	G minor	through-composed	MA Depos. Lohs 4 p.77	Appendix 3
Neue Liebe, Neues Leben	1836	Neue Liebe, Neues Leben (1775)	B-flat major	rondo	MA Ms. 45 p.18-21	Rieger/Walter, 1992 p. 26-29
Sehnsucht	2/2/1839	Sehnsucht (1802)	B minor/ D major	modified strophic	MA Ms. 45, p. 82-88 MA ms. 128, p. 140-6	Assenbaum, 1991 (in transposition) Assenbaum, 1998 (in A minor) Lemke, 1999 (orig. key)
Hausgarten	1840	Hausgarten (1821)	G major	through-composed	MA Ms. 163, p. 111-4 Goethe-Museum Nr. 411	Lemke, 1999 p. 30-31
Dämmerung senkte sich von oben	8/28/1843	Dämmerung senkte sich von oben (1827)	D major	strophic	MA Ms. 86. p. 37 MA Ms. 72, p. 1(frag.)	Maurer, book 2, 1993 p. 12 Lemke, 1999, p. 32-33

MA: Mendelssohn Archive in the Staatsbibliothek Berlin

## APPENDIX B

IST ES MÖGLICH STERN DER STERNE  
original key

Fanny Hensel

**Allegro Vivace**

Ist es mög - lich - Stern der Ster - ne Drück ich wie - der dich ans

He - rz! Ach! was ist die Nacht der Fer - ne Für ein Ab - grund, für ein

Schme - rz! für ein Ab - grund für ein Schmerz! Ja, du bist es, mein - er

13

Freu - den süß-er lieb - er Wi - der - part! Ein - ge-denk ver -

17

gang - ner Lei - den Ein - ge-denk ver gang - ner Leid - en schaudr' ich vor der Ge - gen

21

wart.

## APPENDIX C

## WONNE DER WEHMUT

original key

Fanny Hensel

*Bewegt, nicht zu langsam*

Trock - net nicht, trock - net nicht trä - nen un - glück - li - cher Lie -

8 be! Trock - - - net nicht! Ach nur dem halb - ge -

15 trock - net - en - Au - ge wie kalt wie tot die Welt ihm er - scheint.

15 *stringendo*

22

Trock - net nicht, Trock - net nicht Trä - nen der e - wi - gen, e - wi - gen Lie -

22

30

be!

30

The image shows a musical score for voice and piano. The first system (measures 22-29) features a vocal line in G major with lyrics 'Trock - net nicht, Trock - net nicht Trä - nen der e - wi - gen, e - wi - gen Lie -'. The piano accompaniment consists of chords in the right hand and single notes in the left hand. The second system (measures 30-32) shows the vocal line continuing with 'be!' and the piano accompaniment providing harmonic support. The score is written in G major and 4/4 time.

Transcription of Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin-Preußischer Kulturbesitz, Musikabteilung mit Mendelssohn-Archiv: MA Depos Lohs 4 s.77.